

**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **Press Release**

### **Merritt To Attend Prop 8 Meeting**

LONGVIEW ~ October 20, 2005 at 7:00 pm at Hopewell Baptist Church in Lindale Rep. Tommy Merritt (R-Longview) will attend a meeting with Smith County vacancy application land owners to discuss Proposition 8 on the ballot for November 8, 2005. Passage of Proposition 8 will clear land titles by relinquishing and releasing any state claim to sovereign ownership or title to interest in land involved with the vacancy applications in Smith and Upshur Counties.

Merritt stated, "The passage of Prop 8 is vitally important to the residents of Smith and Upshur County." Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson declared no vacancy in both applications and many land owners are still not able to obtain clear titles for their land. In many cases the land has been owned by several generations. A district court upheld Commissioner Patterson's ruling in Upshur County and the Smith County claim is under appeal by the claimants. Rep. Merritt met and offered advice to hundreds of Smith County land owners October 22, 2003 soon after the claimants filed the vacancy with the General Land Office.

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